

67097-023; 11106

identical description of the claimed invention as required by §102(b). The Examiner appears to be improperly concluding that a seamless boundary would be formed based upon his own technical knowledge, not the disclosure of the WO 739 reference. Accordingly, there is no basis for maintaining the rejection of claims 16-19 and 21-23 and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Regarding claims 24-26, these claims were not rejected and Applicant assumes they are allowable.

Regarding claim 22, the claim recites that "the first membrane layer and a second membrane layer each include a thickness of about 1 micrometer." The WO 739 reference fails to disclose a multilayer structure wherein the layers are each about 1 micrometer thick. Indeed, the WO 739 reference appears to suggest that multiple coatings would only be used when the thickness of a single layer exceeds 6 micrometers (see p. 3, lines 24-28). For this additional reason, claim 22 is allowable and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 6-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 739 in view of Nemser, and alternatively in view of Bowser. The Examiner argues that WO 739 teaches a composite membrane having multiple layers and admits that the reference fails to disclose a drying step between forming the layers. The Examiner relies on Nemser or Bowser to teach this feature. However, Nemser only teaches making a single layer, not multiple layers. Therefore, Nemser cannot teach drying in between forming multiple layers. Regarding Bowser, even though multiple layers are formed, there is no teaching that the process used would achieve a seamless boundary as claimed. There is simply no suggestion to use drying before forming a subsequent layer to form a seamless boundary, as claimed. The Examiner is improperly using the teachings of Applicant's disclosure in hindsight to modify the base reference with Nemser or Bowser. For this reason, claims 6-14 are allowable and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Additionally, the rejection fails to establish *prima facie* obviousness. The rejection states no motivation to make a multiple layer membrane by using a drying step between formation of the layer. Even though Nemser or Bowser may teach drying for forming a single layer, these references provide no direction whatsoever of how to form a multiple layer membrane having a seamless boundary. For this additional reason, the rejection should be withdrawn.

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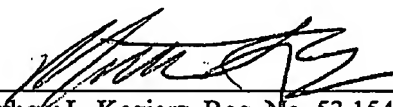
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Page 4 of the office action improperly makes reference to claim 1, which was previously withdrawn from consideration. Applicant requests the Examiner to withdraw the reference to claim 1.

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 739 in view of Nemser, and further in view of Spadaccini or Staroselski. Applicant's previous response dated 18 December 2006 asserts that the Spadaccini and Staroselski were disqualified as prior art. The examiner has not acknowledged or even commented on the disqualification, and applicant maintains that the references are disqualified. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 15 should be withdrawn.

Applicant believes that no additional fees are necessary, however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 21-0279 in the name of United Technologies Corporation for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayment.

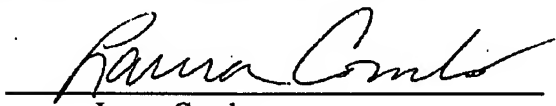
Respectfully submitted,


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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION UNDER 37 CFR 1.8

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States patent and Trademark Office, fax number (571) 273-8300, on June 4, 2007.


Laura Combs